

S.U.S.

The Distress Signal of the
Posture League
Means "Sit Up Straight"
or "Stand Up Straight"—It's
the Cult of the Scientific
Uplift of the Spine.

BY WINIFRED VAN DUZER.

THIS is an age of poses. We hump our protesting backs and stomachs into the architectural idiosyncrasies of the letter S. We feed our tortured frames into the jaws of steel straitjackets, craning upward our necks meanwhile, to appear long and thin, after the manner of baby ribbon, serpentine.

We cultivate a wanness of attitude and a heaviness of eye, and we speak wearily, hoping in our heart to diffuse a rakish and devilish I-know-life air, thereby dragging forth envy and admiration. Or we crinkle into the frilly boundaries of the ingenue, and smile chirpingly and speak effervescently, mindful of carbonated water bubbling through the siphon, hoping to mask age with the vagaries of youth.

Morning, noon and night we pose, mentally and physically. It's the year and the day of poses. But there is hope. While there is life, as the old Doc says, there is hope.

For instance, bookkeepers, who otherwise would remain bookkeepers all their lives, because they have got into the mental and physical letter "U" attitude of humping over high desks, may take heart. All they must do is to unfold their spines and so take the first step toward the firm president's job. The professional hobo has only to lift his chin and lose the shuffle from his feet and he's on the way to becoming a reputable citizen.

It's all in the pose, say members of the American Posture League, which has jumped into the country's civic life by way of New York, where it held its first banquet recently and planned a campaign for the erect shoulder attitude. Miss Jessie H. Bancroft, of Brooklyn, is president of the league, which is made up of about seventy-five physicians and child hygiene experts, all of whom contend that the general physical and mental health depends, chiefly, on the manner of sitting, standing and walking.

Other officers of the league are Dr. Frederick R. Green and Dr. Joel E. Goldthwait, vice presidents; Cornelius S. Loder, treasurer; Dr. Henry Ling Taylor, secretary. Committees have been appointed on shoes, chairs, street car seats and clothes. Already they have gathered tracings of average feet from all parts of the country; drawn up plans of hygienic chairs to submit to Grand Rapids furniture manufacturers, and designed scientifically correct seats for the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Company's new subway cars.

All that the league explains seems extremely logical when the underlying causes are investigated. A large part of the dent a person makes in the affairs of life, say members, is due to his mental attitude, and in the same way his mental attitude is affected by his posture. Allow him to pose as a hobo and subconsciously he adopts the shiftlessness of a hobo. Incorrect postures cause crooked bodies, and crooked bodies are conducive to crooked minds and one can figure out for oneself where crooked minds will bring one.

Avoid from the pecuniary advantages to be derived from practice of the new theory, there is said to be a tremendous increase in the joy of living resultant, and it is for this that we should be most thankful to the scientists who have discovered the cause of our troubled lives.

Things will be different—all different—when the slogan "S. U. S.," meaning "stand up straight!" becomes a household word. In addition to its hygienic value it ought to promote domestic peace and felicity and prevent divorce, operating something as the safety lid that blows off when the gentle boiler lets go. It's about the tactfullest thing a man can say, for instance, when his wife waits for the hat money he spent at poker the night before. A meditative "S. U. S." offered in place of explanation might soothe her anxiety and spoil her hat ambitions.

Fact is the little hint might cover and correct a multitude of petty annoyances and disposition destroyers that begin pouring round one at



from the scalp till her forehead stands out in little ridges. She coils it round, tighter and tighter, and jabs it with a long wire hairpin that goes in at the bottom and sticks through, bow-leggedly, at the top, adding the last bit to your suffering.

Now think! If, instead of saying any one of the number of things that go tumbling through your mind; or if, instead of making for the bathroom and washing soap into your eyes and slashing your chin, you'd simply remark, "S. U. S.," what'd happen?

Why, she'd raise her chin, remove her elbows, and maybe work up her hair puffily, without the wire pin. And your day would begin serenely.

Or supposing that it's the other way round, and that you've been sitting behind the potted plant and coffee most of a quarter of an hour when he crabs in with courtplaster on his chin and red eyes. He drops into his chair, after eyeing it suspiciously, and drags the sugar-bowl toward his plate. He doubles the morning paper through the middle and props it carefully against the sugar-bowl. He rests his elbows on the table, lowers his chin to a point not too high above his plate for free wrist action, humps his shoulders, and fastens his eyes on the printed page. And begins to eat.

All of which may be all right so far as he goes. But it isn't easy to look at. He seems sort of grizzled and slobby, and anyway, no man is lovely at breakfast. You sort of wonder if you haven't made several grave mistakes. Anger seethes in your throat. He ought to be told a thing or two, crouching behind his paper as though he were the only man in the world. Ance holds. And you say: "S. U. S. Will you?" Whereupon William picks up his head,

chucks the paper under the table, and becomes the charming breakfast-in-the-third act husband that you admire so truly.

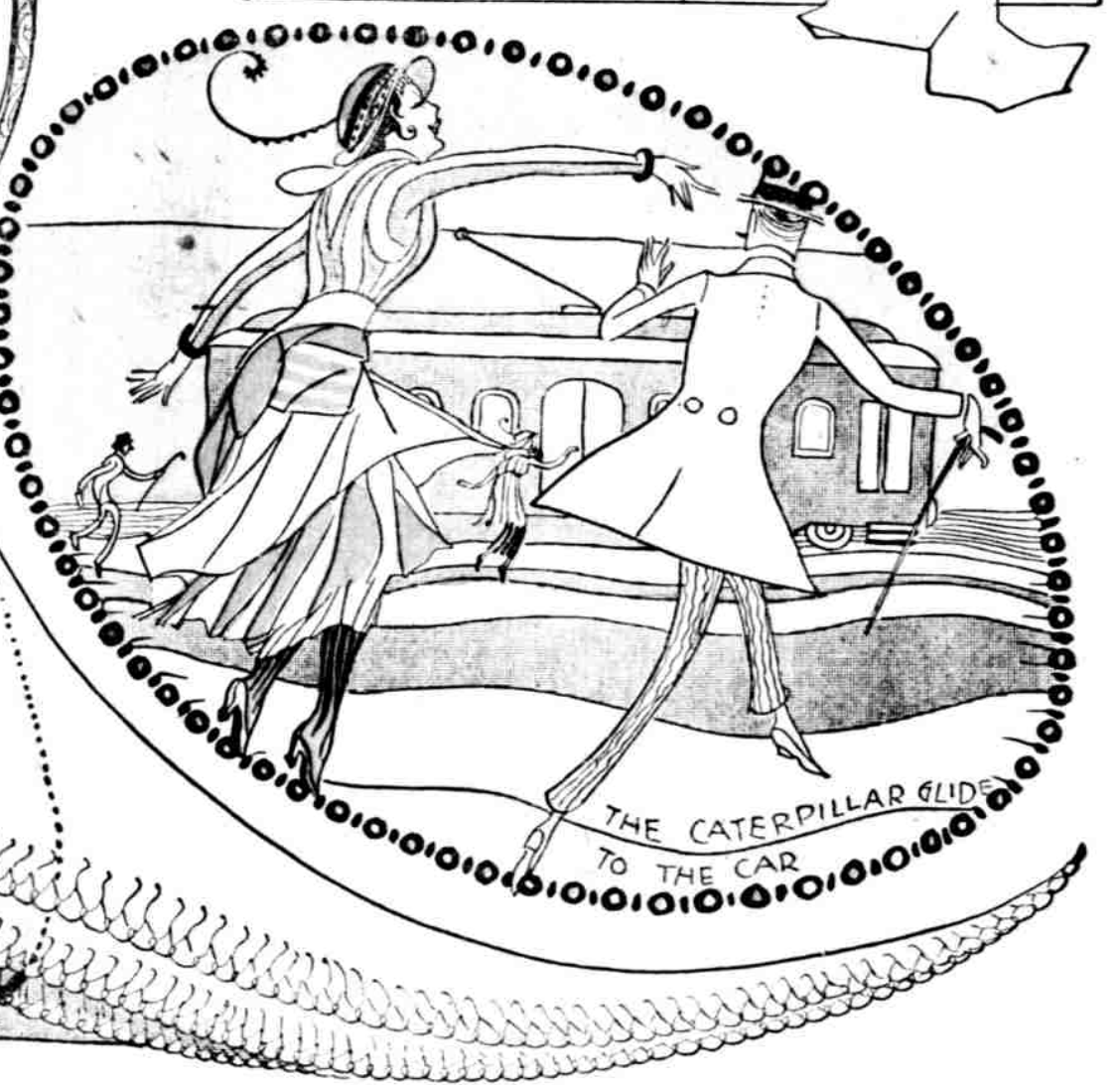
See what it might do?

... ..
Though there's no reason why the benefits of "S. U. S." should be limited to domesticity. Imagine it as a promoter of civic beauty!

Canst picture the man who brings up short 'neath the leer and glare of certain manlaughably-inclined chauffeurs? How he pauses, head thrust forward, arms swinging, hands clutching thin air, feet moving oppositely? Canst think of the admonition drifting into his subconsciousness and the effect thereof? Prexy drops into the gutter; most calmly doth he select from his monogrammed case a cigarette, and apply the flame while Juggernaut thunders by. And so doth the slogan remove from the landscape a picture of craven fear and grotesque activity.

Or it might do a little something toward improving the beauty of the streets as mere woman endeavors to board the new style caterpillar cars. Instead of being forced to view said woman doing weird dance steps back and forth before the sliding doors, it might teach a caterpillar glide, enabling one to lope for several blocks without discomfort beside one of the cars until the worthy director of its destinies thinks to open the doors.

... ..
There will be other changes in our domestic and civic existence when the S. U. S. League begins to take an active part in our problems. Street corners will be supplied with Stand Up Straight back rests for the



THE CATERPILLAR GLIDE
TO THE CAR

benefit of the tired husband who awaits his customarily tardy wife.

Spiral lamp posts will be installed round about for the benefit of those detained almost all night at the bedside of sick friends.

Business of hubby removing his shoes at the door, and pausing on the landing to give nine as correct as possible imitations of the thrice-repeated strokes of the clock in the hall to round out the mid-night hour for friend wife's benefit, will be unnecessary. "Oh, John," she'll say instead, "why did you come home so soon? I'd just found such a delightful posture!"

Other positions there are which will probably be endorsed by members of the S. U. S. movement as conducive to the uplift of things in general:

When assisting at the baby's morning exercise at 1 a. m., earlier or later.

When spanking said baby when pedestrianism palls.

When telling father how it happened that his only female child was caught sitting upon one's lap.

When wife gets snippy about her family showing yours all up in the matter of class.

When the boss inquires in the morning if you've pawned your alarm clock.

When you dig for the waiter's check—and find your money in your other clothes.

When you've mixed grub-dispensers at dinner, and it looks like you'd have to eat your sherbet with a fish fork.

When an acquaintance at the charity ball gazes meditatively at your wife on the other side of the room and asks who in heaven's name that homely-looking woman is.

Or when you're introduced at the house party to the girl who wouldn't flirt with you on the train.

Kahanamoku Kick Is Swimming Stroke for 1915

THE performances of Kahanamoku, the Hawaiian, in the New South Wales championship swimming carnival, particularly the Olympic record holder's lowering of the world's record for 100 yards of 54 3-5 seconds by four-fifths of a second, has caused a decided stir in Australian swimming circles. Indeed, it is predicted by sporting authorities that the Australian "crawl" stroke will have to give way to what is being called the "Kahanamoku kick."

It had been contended ever since "Dick" Cavill first used the "crawl" in championship races that the leg work did not materially assist the pace of the swimmer except in keeping the body well balanced on the water and thus minimizing the retarding effects due to the legs and feet sinking. But this theory was quite upset by the methods of the "Duke" and his swimming mate, George Gunha, also of Hawaii, who use the rapid independent movement of the feet, as against the Australian fashion of smacking the leg from the knee down upon the water at every stroke of the arm. The slow, easy movements of Kahanamoku and Gunha from the hips to the tips of the fingers were markedly in contrast in the races with the style which the Australian cracks pitted against them. The buried heads of Harry and Longworth of Sydney, who are among Australia's best, was also in contrast with that of the Hawaiian. The "Duke" kept his head well clear of the water and had, what his competitors did

not possess, a clear view of what every opponent was doing.

"Swim with the head low so that your legs will float nearer the surface," has been one of the first instructions given by the coaches in Australia to racing swimmers; and this has been followed by injunctions to work the arms fast and the legs in unison with them and to roll the body slightly from side to side so that from the hips up it should assist the arms and make breathing easier. But all these requirements, it is pointed out by experts here, are more than met by the "Kahanamoku" or independent "kick."

According to these same experts this kick originated in the fresh water baths of the eastern United States where the more rapid movement of the legs was necessary to overcome the less buoyant fresh water as against the salt water baths of Australia where the "crawl" was evolved. But this opinion seems pretty far fetched when one bears in mind that Kahanamoku belongs to a race of islanders who have no superiors in the world as swimmers and that his prowess is likely instinctive rather than the result of any artificial conditions.

However that may be, the Australian swimmers admit now that they have seen him race, that the "Duke's" kick serves all the purposes of the "crawl," and that it is much faster and needs less exertion than their own method of locomotion in the water. Before Kahanamoku went to the Antipodes there was some skepticism about his achievements, but it vanished after his first performance. It is only ten years since the then

wonderful feat of swimming one hundred yards in a minute was accomplished by the Australian and world's champion, F. C. V. Lane, in England. He was followed by several other exponents of the "crawl," and at one stage Australia claimed the only four men who had covered that distance in that time—Lane, Cavill, Healy and Wickham. But it was another American, Charles M. Daniels, who upset their calculations, and although Australia is still the place par excellence of swimmers, generally speaking, and Australia possesses many first-class performers in the water, it is more than likely that the Honolulu's style will have to be taken up if Australia hopes to keep up its record.

The popular view of the Hawaiian's victory—although he was beaten by an Australian in one of the three races in which he participated—is perhaps best expressed in this comment by a Sydney newspaper: "Kahanamoku has justified all that was said of him. It was not mere physique that did it, for although his physique is fine, it is not unsurpassable. No doubt the fact that he is practically a waterman, and has lived in the water ever since soon after he was born, has made a difference, though some Australians have been watermen in almost that sense too. But his American training must certainly be counted in. The Americans got hold of him early. They found the man with the possibilities, and they turned him out a specialized swimming machine."